

REMARKS

Claim 1 has been amended. No claims have been cancelled. No new claims have been added. Thus, claims 1-2, 4-5, and 7-8 are pending.

The drawings have been objected to. Filed concurrently with this paper is a proposed drawing correction to address the outstanding objection. The Examiner is requested to review and approve the proposed drawing correction. Additionally, the specification has been amended in view of the proposed drawing correction.

Claims 1-5 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Matsushita (European Patent Application No. 0 307 509 B1). Claim 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Matsushita. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites: "A cutting apparatus comprising: ... a sensor for detecting if the portion of the protective tape on a wafer is properly removed by said cutting element; ... and a circuit for initiating corrective action to stop the transport mechanism from moving the wafer to the grinding apparatus when the sensor detects that the protective tape is not properly removed from a wafer by said cutting element." (emphasis supplied)

Matsushita discloses an apparatus for cutting tape around a wafer and preventing the wafer itself from being cut. The Office Action alleges that either sensor 90 or sensor 110, or the combination is equivalent to the claimed sensor. However, it should be recognized that Matsushita discloses a sensor which detects wafers and a sensor which detects the position of the cutter. More specifically, with respect to sensor 90, Matsushita discloses at column 8, lines 25-28:

Shown at 90 in Fig. 12 is a photoelectric detector provided on the frame 97. The detector 90 emits light and detects the peripheral edge of the wafer 3 from changes in the reflected light." (emphasis supplied).

Similarly, with respect to sensor 110, Matsushita discloses at column 8, lines 47-50:

A photo electric detector 110 is provided to detect the rotative edge of the shaft 102 to sense deviation of the cutter 105 in the circumferential direction of the wafer 3.

Thus, contrary to the assertion made in the Office Action, neither sensors 90 nor 110, whether used singly or in combination yields the sensor, or the structure responsive to the sensor, as recited in claim 1.

Independent claim 1 is therefore believed to be allowable over the prior art of record. Depending claims 2, 4-5, and 7-8 are also believed to be allowable for at least the same reason as independent claim 1.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

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Respectfully submitted,

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